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AUTHOR James, Darlene K.
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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to develop a transition program and social activities for sixth-graders to help ease the passage from elementary school and increase their sense of belonging in a sixth- through eighth-grade junior high school. The students were surveyed concerning their degree of self-esteem, connection to school, perception of opportunities for social interaction with their peers, and perception of opportunities to develop excellence. Parents and teachers were surveyed concerning program development and implementation. Various social activities were developed or opened up to sixth-grade participation, including school spirit days, activity days, inter-scholastic cross-country, band, intramural athletics, art club, and yearbook committee. The results of the intervention were mixed, with student and teacher attitudes remaining largely the same before and after program implementation. The physical and educational isolation of the sixth-grade students and teachers in the school building, as well as friction between teachers and the school administration, were seen as contributing factors to low levels of school spirit and morale among a large segment of the sixth-grade student and teacher population. (Eight appendixes contain copies of the student, parent, and teacher surveys, the results of these surveys, and a record of student participation in program activities.) (MDM)

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Meeting the Social Needs of Sixth Grade Students Moving into a Junior High or Middle School Through an Integrated Activities Program

by

Darlene K. James

Cluster 56

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1994

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: Thomas F. Lenhardt
Thomas F. Lenhardt

Principal
Title

Lemont, Illinois
Address

April 11, 1994
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Darlene James under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at the University.

Approved:

5/24/94
Date of Final Approval of Report

Georgianna Lowen
Georgianna Lowen, Ed.D., Adviser

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I gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and support of my colleagues, especially the sixth grade teaching team for their help in distributing, explaining, and collecting questionnaires and record-keeping on school spirit days.

Recognition is also given to my building principal, Thomas F. Lenhardt, and his assistant, Jeff Libowitz, for their support of the sixth grade transition program, providing the funding for and initiating the intramural program and the after-school activity days.

Appreciation is given to the District 113A parent-teacher organization for providing finances for the motivational speaker to officially open our theme year and return to bring closure to it.

Final recognition is extended to my brother-in-law, Jim Bolerjack, who became my on-site computer technical adviser, and my husband, Lee James, who helped with tabulations or technical computer "stuff" whenever he was asked, but more importantly, supported and encouraged me throughout the project.

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ABSTRACT

Meeting the Social Needs of Sixth Grade Students Moving into a Junior High or Middle School Through an Integrated Activities Program. James, Darlene K., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Transition/Sixth Grade/Social Development/Adolescent Needs

This practicum was designed to develop a social activities/transition program for sixth graders moving from an elementary setting to a junior high or middle school. Sixth graders were surveyed concerning their degree of self-esteem, degree of "connection" to school, perception of opportunities for social interaction with their peers, and perception of opportunities to demonstrate excellence. Sixth graders and their parents were surveyed for their input on program development. Teachers were surveyed for their input prior to program development and following implementation.

The writer chaired a committee which developed a social activities/transition program implemented in the writer's work setting and recorded student participation, providing feedback to grade level teachers.

Analysis of the data revealed that a social activities/transition program was indeed needed for sixth graders and that they were eager to participate in school programming.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The school within which the writer works is set in a rapidly growing, predominately white, suburban community. While the majority of the families would be classified socio-economically as middle class, the individual family income ranges from very poor to wealthy. The community's population growth is primarily due to its nearness to a metropolitan area, its accessibility by expressways and railroad, and its small-town appeal. The residential growth is mainly among the middle and upper middle economic classes.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer's work setting is a junior high school which housed approximately 480 students, grades 6-8, during the 1993-94 school year. Due to growth of student population, three classrooms for the junior high were housed in mobile units. There were five sections of each grade, with approximately 32 students in each section. Also housed in the junior high

building were two cross-category self-contained special education classes.

Students were heterogeneously grouped, moving from class to class as homeroom units. Students from the special education classes were mainstreamed when deemed appropriate by the multi-disciplinary staffing team. Gifted language arts, math, and science classes were available to students who qualified, and individual tutoring, Chapter One services, learning disability resource personnel, and regular education initiative (REI) programs were available to students who required special services.

The writer is a member of the eighth grade teaching team. For the 1993-94 year, she was teaching in the implementation of a combined language arts/literature program. She and a colleague were each teaching two sections of the class and were sharing (team-teaching) the remaining section. Included in their integrated program was the initiation of portfolio assessment. She and her teaching partner were also co-ordinating the implementation of portfolio assessment in grades 6 and 7 in the areas of language arts and literature.

In the recent past she team taught a section of American history with a learning disabilities resource teacher (REI). She also was active in curriculum development and textbook selection for eighth grade language arts, literature, and social studies. She initiated a school yearbook and served as its faculty sponsor.

She was a key member on a committee for the development of an intervention program for at-risk students, taught in the piloting of the program, and participated in its evaluation. The intervention program has since been adopted as a permanent part of the school program.

The writer also serves as a teacher representative to the local parent-teacher organization and served as a building representative to the district-wide communications council. She is an active participant in the superintendent's forum, an open discussion held quarterly between district administration and interested or concerned teachers. She is also a member of the district's staff development committee and a committee for developing a school improvement plan.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The situation that needed improvement was that there was no socialization program (this term is used interchangeably with social integration and social inclusion) in place for sixth graders in the writer's work setting. There were numerous activities available for seventh and eighth graders; however, there were few social inclusion opportunities available for sixth graders, resulting in their detachment from school, low self-esteem, and lack of opportunity to develop social interaction and leadership skills.

Problem Documentation

Evidence supported the existence of the problem. For the past three years sixth graders had not been housed in the writer's work setting; therefore, there had been no need for policy or programming for them in the junior high school. Historically, (when sixth graders previously were housed in the junior high

building) there was no provision for socialization opportunities for sixth graders.

Shortly after the administrative decision was made to include sixth graders in the junior high school setting for the coming year, concerns were expressed by parents and teachers of incoming sixth graders, and students themselves, over the provision of socialization opportunities for these students. A common concern was that the sixth graders would be excluded from socialization opportunities. Sixth grade teachers expressed concern that their students would be considered the "step-children" or "second-class citizens" of the school and this would build resentment for school and diminish self-esteem. The administrative staff at the junior high school agreed that programming should be made available to promote the social development of sixth graders, the same as it was for seventh and eighth graders.

Causative Analysis

Causes of the problem were many. Obviously, no such program for sixth graders was needed in the writer's work setting during the years the sixth

graders were housed elsewhere.

Previously, programming may have been lacking due to lack of perception of its significance. Teachers and parents of sixth graders brought their concerns to building administration, but did not persist in expressing their concern and/or volunteer to co-ordinate efforts to develop needed programming. Administration was occupied with high priority items and did not have time to pursue special social integration programming for sixth graders. Dealing with the rapid enrollment growth was a perpetually time-consuming problem for the administration. Curriculum evaluation and revision was ongoing. For several years, the district was involved in a consolidation effort, which was demanding. Asbestos removal and building renovation programs also took their toll in time and energy.

The absence of social integration opportunities for sixth graders was not due to deliberate exclusion. Time and energy constraints on the part of the administration were important factors as was the absence of a staff member alert to the problem and committed enough to its resolution to assume a

leadership role in the development of a social integration program for sixth graders.

Limitations of the daily schedule and the building facilities also restricted the development of social integration programming for sixth graders. Finding time in an already full schedule and a place for implementation, in an overcrowded facility, posed more problems. However, once the move of sixth grade back to the junior high building was announced, parents of incoming sixth graders, sixth grade teachers, and incoming sixth graders themselves expressed their concern over social inclusion and integration opportunities and persisted in pursuing the development of social development programming.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A review of related research supported the need of adolescents for socialization programming within the school setting. A major developmental task of adolescence is developing a sense of identity (Hillman, 1991). Glatthorn and Spencer (1986) agree and present a nine-point rationale for a strong activity program for young adolescents. In their rationale, they

discuss the following needs of young adolescents. The need to (a) develop leadership and decision-making skills, (b) have healthy interactions with members of the same sex, and with members of the opposite sex; (c) develop multiple talents, (d) develop interpersonal skills, (e) develop new relationships, (f) develop new interests, (g) have a change of pace, (h), celebrate and perform, (i) serve.

They contend that a strong activity program addresses the individual social developmental needs more effectively than does the curriculum in the traditional classroom by providing a different environment, multiple relationships, varying spirit and mood, and alternative views of learning and ability. Cicatelli and Gaddie (1992) agree that "one basic premise of middle school philosophy is that all students should be given the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities in order to discover and explore their skills and talents" (p. 55).

Teachers and curriculum designers should include more creative and diversified activities and socialization opportunities in the way in which they design and deliver the middle school curriculum as a

means of reducing psychological stressors (Butte, 1993). Kurtzberg and Kurtzberg (1993) suggest the use of the Future Problem Solving process as a creative means of diversification. They propose this method as a means of arousing students' interest in school, providing opportunities for working together, building linkage to real-life problems, and developing an awareness of self-strengths and limitations.

A part of the adolescent's search for identity includes his or her understanding of position in the community. Adams (1993) suggests the merits of a community service program as a means of developing socialization skills, esteem, and role. Such a program has the positive side effect of building community support for school programs.

Self-regulation is a basic step in the cognitive and social development of the individual. Johnson, Johnson, Dudley, and Burnett (1992) propose teaching students to be peer mediators. They contend through the process of learning self-regulation, students advance developmentally, learning how to change the way they behave in order to act appropriately and effectively.

Wise, Bundy, Bundy, and Wise (1991) agree with the need for development of social skills within adolescents. They developed an assertiveness training curriculum, including concepts and consequences of assertion and its alternatives (nonassertion and aggression) for use with sixth graders. Their curriculum is based on the premise that assertiveness represents an important set of social skills.

The impact of age mixing or age stratification of the social development of adolescents was studied by Allen (1989). He concluded that providing opportunities for both mixed-age and same-age friendship may maximize the beneficial effects of each.

Much of the literature concerning social development of sixth graders specifically addresses development and the transition process (transition referring to the changes associated with the physical move from an elementary setting to a junior high or middle school setting). A report on a three-year demonstration project sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1985) sets forth criteria for identifying transition points and suggests that when changes occur in combination, the

transition problems are multiplied. During the transition from elementary grades to middle school or junior high school, generally multiple changes are occurring. The students are usually changing physical setting, moving to a different building or separate section of a school, and moving from a self-contained setting to a departmentalized one, possibly even individualized scheduling.

Wigfield, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman, and Midgley (1991) conducted a study of changes in children's domain-specific self-perceptions and general self-esteem across the transition to junior high school. Among their conclusions was the belief that "Schools need to provide some means for young adolescents to develop more positive beliefs about the legitimate activities they can participate in at school."

The transition process appears to be especially crucial to the at-risk student. During transition to junior high school, successful students engage in social activities with other participants successfully, and unsuccessful students seem to let procedural and social matters interfere with academic tasks, and often alienate themselves (Ward, Rounds, Packer,

Mergendoller, & Tikunoff, 1982). After studying data from the Pennsylvania Early Adolescent Transitions Study, Talwar, Schwab, and Lerner (1989) concluded that variations among adolescents in their temperament, their actions and reactions in social situations, may place them at risk or at advantage regarding scholastic endeavors.

Mekos (1989) reached similar conclusions concerning the transition process and the at-risk student. Mekos examined changes in students' perceptions of junior high school while they were in transition, and related these perceptions to academic adjustment. Mekos found that aggressive and disruptive students were least concerned with and least prepared for the challenges of transition, and met with the least success.

Three separate studies of adolescents and transition to middle school were conducted by Fenzel (1989, 1990, 1991), signifying the importance of this event. Included in Fenzel's findings were:

1. Lower self-esteem is related to increased strain for low-competence students; however, high competence students maintain low strain levels

regardless of self-esteem level (1991).

2. Student age relative to classmates is not a crucial factor in school adjustment during early adolescence (1990).

3. Girls are likely to be less strained in elementary school; however, boys should benefit more from the move into middle school if the new setting provides opportunity for physical activity, more male role models, and more autonomous movement between classes (1989).

The literature supported the significance of the social development of adolescents during the transition progress and the need for the middle school or junior high school curriculum to provide activities to address social development.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum. Sixth-grade students' transition to junior high school would be accomplished through building self-esteem, demonstrating individual excellence, increasing connection to school, and improving interpersonal relationships.

Expected Outcomes

Outcome One

Of 160 sixth graders, at least 128 would participate in a minimum of two of the planned social activities. A record of participation would be made as each of the activities occurs, to obtain the participation data (see Appendix A).

During the first week of implementation a teacher-made questionnaire concerning self-esteem, connection to school, and perceived opportunities for social interaction and demonstration of individual excellence

would be administered to 160 sixth-grade students (see Appendix B). At the end of twelve weeks of implementation, the same group would have administered to it a teacher-made post questionnaire (see Appendix C).

Comparative results would indicate that at least 128 sixth graders maintained or improved their self-esteem, improved their sense of connection to school, and increased in their perception of opportunities for social interaction and demonstration of individual excellence.

Outcome Two

Of parent responses to teacher-made post implementation questionnaire, at least 30 of 50 respondents would indicate the transition program generally met their child's overall social needs.

During the first week of implementation, a teacher-made questionnaire would be sent to all parents of sixth graders to ascertain the parents' perceived social needs or concerns of their children and to solicit parent input for programming (see Appendix D). After 12 weeks of implementation, the same group of parents would be surveyed by teacher-made questionnaire to determine the degree to which they felt the

to determine the degree to which they felt the transition program met the needs of their children (see Appendix E).

Results would indicate that at least 30 of 50 respondents believed the transition program generally (as specified on questionnaire) met their children's needs.

Outcome Three

Of sixth grade teachers responding to teacher-made post implementation questionnaire, at least 6 of 10 respondents would believe most of the sixth graders had developed a sense of belonging or connection to school, participated in the socialization opportunities provided for them, experienced opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence, and exhibited positive self-esteem (see Appendix F).

After 12 weeks of program implementation, all teachers of sixth graders would be surveyed to ascertain their perception of the degree of success of the transition program. Survey results would indicate that at least 6 of 10 teachers responding believed most of the sixth graders had developed a sense of connection to school, participated in the socialization

opportunities, demonstrated individual excellence, and exhibited positive self-esteem.

Measurement of Outcomes

A record of participation was to be made as each of the activities occurred to obtain the participation information. Homeroom teachers, supervisors of activities, and this researcher would maintain records of participation (see Appendix A).

At the inception of the social integration program, 160 sixth grade students were to be surveyed by teacher-made written questionnaire concerning self-esteem, connection to school, and perceived opportunities for social interaction and demonstration of individual excellence (see Appendix B). After twelve weeks of implementation, a teacher-made written post-questionnaire survey was to be administered to the same 160 sixth-grade students. Each of these surveys was to be administered during the students' social studies class, allowing twenty minutes for distribution, explanation, completion, and collection of each of the surveys.

Parents were to be surveyed by teacher-made written questionnaire (see Appendix D). Parent questionnaires were to be sent home with the students during the first week of program implementation and returned to school the next day. The sixth grade social studies teacher would distribute the parent questionnaires, and sixth grade homeroom teachers would collect them the next morning. Provision was to be made for both parents (in two-parent families) to complete the questionnaire, if they chose to do so individually.

Parents were to be post surveyed by teacher-made written questionnaire after 12 weeks of program implementation (see Appendix E). The same procedure was to be used for conducting the parent post survey as was used for the initial parent survey.

After 12 weeks of program implementation, the teachers of all sixth graders were to be surveyed by teacher-made written questionnaire (see Appendix F). The researcher would distribute the questionnaires to the sixth grade teachers at a grade level team meeting. The teachers were to be given fifteen minutes to complete the questionnaire independently, after which the researcher would collect them.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

There was previously no social development program in place for sixth graders in the writer's work setting. A review of the literature yielded several possible strategies for adaptation. Glatthorn and Spencer (1986) suggest including in the school programming for sixth graders, a variety of interscholastic and intramural sports, specifically, track, basketball, gymnastics, swimming, and soccer. They also suggest celebrations, including assemblies and social activities, and clubs, publications, dramatics, and musical group.

Other suggested strategies included using students as peer mediators (Johnson, Johnson, Dudley, and Burnett, 1992); involving the students in community service projects (Adams, 1993); establishing a mentoring program (Hamilton and Hamilton, 1992); and incorporating a variety of cooperative learning strategies into curriculum delivery (Klemp, Hon, and Shorr, 1993). McDonough (1991) suggests a traditional

school might choose to alter or totally revamp its entire curriculum in its attempts to address social development.

The writer agreed with Glatthorn and Spencer (1993) that an extended activity program would provide more students with opportunities to develop leadership skills and other skills necessary in interpersonal relationships. It would also provide more students with the opportunity to develop their diverse physical skills, as well as build connection to school and self-esteem.

Assemblies for the purpose of celebration would provide the students with a common experience and could serve to build bonds. Celebration assemblies might also serve as an avenue for demonstration of excellence or recognition of excellence.

The writer also agreed with Glatthorn and Spencer (1993) that interest groups such as school publications, drama and theater groups, and music groups would provide opportunities for interaction and leadership.

Utilizing students as peer mediators (Johnson, Johnson, Dudley, and Burnett, 1992) would help them to

build problem solving skills, communication skills, and other interpersonal relationship skills. Also, using seventh and eighth grade students as peer tutors could help to build bonds between the grade levels, as well as individual social skills and esteem.

The writer also agreed with Adams (1993) that involving students in community service projects provides the students with opportunities to develop a variety of social skills, as well as builds self-esteem for the individual and positive image for the school.

Utilizing staff members as mentors (Hamilton and Hamilton, 1992), especially for targeted "at-risk" students, could be most effective in raising student esteem, breaking down negative social patterns, and building positive ones. To maximize effectiveness, in any mentoring program, would-be mentors should be volunteers and should participate in the development of guidelines for mentors. Mentors to volunteer at a later date should undergo training before entering into the mentor relationship.

Revamping the entire curriculum (McDonough, 1991) certainly has its possibilities. However, this radical of a procedure would necessitate a total school

commitment and massive community education. More realistic is an individual teacher (or a teaching team) focusing on the development of self image and social skills in his or her classroom, and by modeling, encouraging other teachers to do so. Co-operative learning is a strategy that might be used in this situation.

Co-operative learning is an excellent means of developing interpersonal skills, responsibility, leadership, and approaching problem solving (Klemp, Hon, and Shorr, 1993). Teachers should be trained in using co-operative learning as a teaching method, and should be encouraged to use co-operative learning units with adolescents. However, co-operative learning may not address all the their social development needs. With its focus on group interaction, it may leave unnoticed the special areas of excellence of individual students, such as ice skating or chess playing.

The social development needs of the adolescent are best met by programming that utilizes a variety of strategies.

Description and Justification for Solution Selected

The writer believed a variety of activities was required for a social development program to effectively meet the diverse needs of sixth graders, and was prepared to: form and chair committees; prepare, distribute, and tabulate questionnaires; interview students, teachers, and parents; mediate between parties in conflict; present the philosophy and workings of the social development program to interested groups; and solicit necessary funding. The solution selected included a variety of programming and diverse strategies.

Allowing sixth grade students to participate in interscholastic activities, such as cross country and track, provided them with the opportunity to enhance social development. The students had the opportunity to develop individual excellence, while obtaining the benefits of being part of a team. They also could learn to set goals and work toward them and learn to learn from both winning and losing, and to turn either experience into a positive one.

Providing sixth graders with intramural activities, which seventh and eighth graders have, was

partially geared to building the sixth graders' esteem, as they were encouraged to realize they were not being left out of a "fun" part of the school program, and provided an opportunity for all sixth graders who chose to participate in a team sport to do so, in a non-stressful environment.

Opening art club, chorus, band, publications and theater to sixth graders provided an opportunity for social development in the pursuit of fine arts activities, possibly appealing to some students who are not athletically inclined.

Giving the students of a given grade level the responsibility for planning, promoting, and coordinating a school-wide spirit day provided many opportunities for interaction. It also might have been perceived by the students as an indication of trust and encouraged them to demonstrate their leadership capabilities.

Adoption of an all-school theme provided a focal point around which all the social program activities could be built and extended the program beyond the activities and into the everyday life of the school.

A student-planned after school sixth grade

activity day monthly served much the same purpose of a student-planned spirit day and intramurals, except it addressed an even broader range of student interests and provided even more opportunities for interaction.

Report of Action Taken

Preliminary work for the development of a socialization plan for sixth graders began in March, 1993. At this time, the writer met with her building principal and notified him of her intent to pursue the development of an activity program for sixth graders.

In early April, 1993, the writer presented to the staff of the school, the concept of the need for such a program and asked for volunteers to serve on the committee to develop it. Also in April, the writer met with fifth and sixth grade teachers in her district, presented the concept of the need for a social activity program, and asked for volunteers to serve on the development committee.

In early May, 1993, the writer met with her committee consisting of classroom teachers from grades six through eight, representatives from special education, specialized teachers, and administration.

The purpose of this first meeting was to brainstorm needs, focus, and possible activities. The writer maintained minutes of all committee meetings and kept all concerned staff apprised of committee proposals.

The writer met with her activity program committee in mid-May to prioritize activities. One proposal was that the school become a "theme" school and that the incoming sixth through eighth grade students select the theme. The following week, teachers submitted possible themes to the writer, who then compiled a list to be presented to the staff for a vote to narrow it.

In late May, the writer presented the concept of the proposed social activity program to incoming students at grade levels six, seven, and eight, and conducted an election for choice of school theme. The last day of school before summer break, the students were notified of the results of the election for theme, THEIR choice of school theme for the 1993-94 school year. The theme selected was Accept the Challenge--Be All That You Can Be!

In early June, the writer researched available appropriate speakers and contacted one concerning "kicking off" the theme year and returning in the

spring of 1994 to bring closure to the theme year. The desired speaker was receptive to the idea.

Next the writer contacted the school's parent-teacher organization, explaining the proposed program, and soliciting funding to cover the cost of the speaker for the two special assemblies. Funding was granted.

In July the writer contracted the speaker for the two theme assemblies and had banners made promoting the theme. In late August the banners were placed appropriately around the school building and the theme was placed on the school's electronic message center. Also in late August, the writer met with the committee of staff members to review plans for the social activities program.

When implementation actually began, a welcoming assembly was held for sixth graders, at which time, students were made aware of organized activities available for them:

1. Intramurals would be provided one evening a week for boys and one evening for girls.

2. They would be eligible to participate in interscholastic sports of cross country and track.

3. They were invited to participate in band,

yearbook, and art club.

4. Grade levels would rotate sponsoring school spirit days once each quarter. On Spirit Days, the students would show their school spirit by dressing in the school colors, red and black, or in other apparel or costuming designated as appropriate for showing school spirit on a particular Spirit Day. When it was a given grade level's turn, that grade would choose the topic (crazy hat day, favorite sport team T-shirt day, pajama day, Western day, favorite movie star day, favorite historic figure day, etc.), promote it, and support it by wearing the appropriate garb.

5. Sixth graders would not be allowed to attend evening dances, but wuld have an equal number of after-school Activity Days. Sixth-grade students would participate in the planning of these activities. Possibilities for activity days included open gym, mixed volleyball, board games and board game competitions, mixed dancing (for those so inclined), supervised party games (scattergories, pictionary, jeopardy, etc.). Input as to activities would be solicited from sixth graders themselves and built into the after-school activity program as much as possible.

Also during the first week of implementation, the writer submitted a questionnaire to parents of sixth graders eliciting their input concerning perceived needs and suggested activities (see Appendix D).

The writer then surveyed by questionnaire sixth graders concerning esteem, school connection, perceived opportunities for social interaction, and perceived opportunities for demonstration of individual excellence (see Appendix B).

The writer co-ordinated an all-school assembly to "kick off" the year-long school theme. The assembly was followed with a goal-setting session when the students returned to their homerooms.

Next, the writer recorded names of all sixth graders on a grid to begin record-keeping of participation in program activities (see Appendix A).

The writer also compiled the data from the parent and student questionnaires and met informally with the members of the social activities committee to discuss results.

The assistant principal was determined that the after-school Activity Day be a sock hop in the cafeteria, with a movie available as an alternative

choice in an adjoining room. He, with the principal, surveyed the students and their parents, circumvented the teachers, and planned and supervised this activity themselves.

The writer recorded the names of all sixth graders participating in the first after school Activity Day and in School Spirit Days, promoted by the seventh and eighth graders.

The writer acted as facilitator in the initiation of the sixth grade intramural program and asked the sixth grade intramural director to keep an attendance record, to be submitted to the writer at the end of each week, for record-keeping purposes.

The writer compiled information of sixth grade student participation in band, cross country, art club, and yearbook. This information was obtained by asking sponsoring teachers for a roster of their sixth-grade participants.

The writer met with sixth-grade students during the lunch recess and began working on plans for their Spirit Day. Students working on the plans kept their homeroom apprised of the progress and solicited help in planning and promotion. Students who had not yet

participated in an activity were encouraged to serve on the planning or promotion committee. The theme for sixth-grade sponsored School Spirit Day, Nerd Day, was selected by the students. Sixth-grade committees made posters and wrote announcements promoting the theme for demonstrating school spirit on their Spirit Day. Posters were placed in the school cafeteria, gym, all homerooms, and in the halls. The writer recorded individual participation in the sixth-grade sponsored School Spirit Day.

At the end of 12 weeks of implementation, the writer repeated by questionnaire the survey of sixth graders concerning esteem, school connection, perceived opportunities for social interaction, and perceived opportunities for demonstration of individual excellence (see Appendix C). The writer also repeated by questionnaire the survey of parents of sixth graders, concerning perceived effects of the social activities program (see Appendix E). Finally, the writer surveyed by questionnaire, the teachers of sixth graders to determine their perception of the effects of the social activities program (see Appendix F).

The writer did not meet with the social activities

program development committee at the end of 12 weeks of implementation because the group had disbanded. The writer did meet with the principal informally to discuss the results of the first 12 weeks of the transition program, and met with colleagues informally to ascertain their impressions of the results of the program.

The primary roadblocks encountered were to some extent predictable, yet unavoidable. The sixth-grade teachers consider themselves to be isolated from the rest of the staff. They are physically isolated in the building, being in their own wing. They are also physically isolated by scheduling, having their lunch break at a time separate from the rest of the staff. They appear to be emotionally isolated, perhaps due to their having been shuffled from one building to another and back. As the district has experienced growth problems, sixth grade seems to have become a mobile class, being moved from junior high to elementary and back, with teachers having to adjust to working under varying building administrators and philosophies. Breaking barriers of isolation is difficult in any situation, in this particular district, it seems to be

especially difficult.

An unanticipated roadblock emerged at the opening of school. The district teachers had agreed to a new contract, but due to a dispute over interpretation of certain language in it, teachers were required to work an extended day without compensation, performing previously paid duties. Obtaining teacher support requiring any extra meetings, supervision, or effort was extremely difficult due to the pervading feeling of having been taken advantage of. This atmosphere continued throughout implementation, with teachers being torn between what they wanted to do (throw themselves wholeheartedly into the sixth-grade transition program) and what they felt they must do in order to make a statement to building and district administration. The after-school Activity Days became a direct casualty of this conflict. The sixth-grade teachers were adamantly against social dancing for sixth graders. Administration promoted the Activity Day as a sock hop. Administration did not ask teachers for input or to chaperone alternative activities. Sixth-grade teachers would not have attended anyway due to the tension between administration and staff.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

There was no socialization program in place for sixth graders in the writer's work setting, resulting in their detachment from school, low self-esteem, and the lack of opportunity for them to develop social interaction and leadership skills. The solution strategy was to develop a program which would increase attachment to school, raise self-esteem, provide opportunities for sixth graders to excel individually, and develop social interaction and leadership skills.

Outcome One

Of 160 sixth graders, it was expected that at least 128 would participate in a minimum of 2 of the planned social activities. At the end of 12 weeks, 10 activities had been recorded: 5 School Spirit Days, Cross Country, Band, Intramurals, Activity Day, and Art Club/Yearbook participation. As shown in Table 1, this outcome was met and exceeded, with 152 students participating in a minimum of two of the program activities.

Table 1

Student Participation

	No. of Activities								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No. of Participants	8	20	37	42	36	12	4	1	0

During the first week of implementation, a teacher-made questionnaire concerning self-esteem, connection to school, and perceived opportunities for social interaction and demonstration of individual excellence was administered to 160 sixth-grade students (see Appendix B). At the end of 12 weeks of implementation, a teacher-made post-questionnaire was administered to the same group (see Appendix C).

Comparative results were expected to indicate that at least 128 sxith graders maintained or improved their self-esteem, improved their sense of connection to school, and increased in their perception of opportunities for social interaction and demonstration of individual excellence.

Of the 160 students surveyed, 158 returned their questionnaires. Results of the initial student survey are shown in Figure 1.

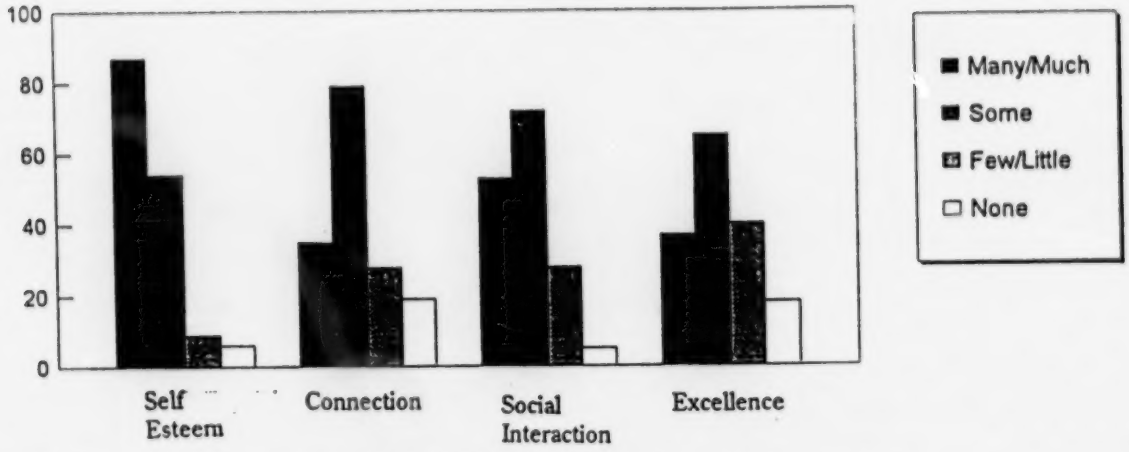

Figure 1. Results of Initial Student Questionnaire

The number of positive responses to degree of self-esteem at the onset of the program was larger than anticipated and was encouraging, with 141 students placing themselves on the positive half of the continuum.

Results of the student post-survey are shown in figure 2. They were both surprising and alarming. Of 160 students surveyed, 148 returned their questionnaires. However, the number of those wavering or responding as having negative attitudes remained constant or in some instances even increased. It was expected that this number would decrease. It appears

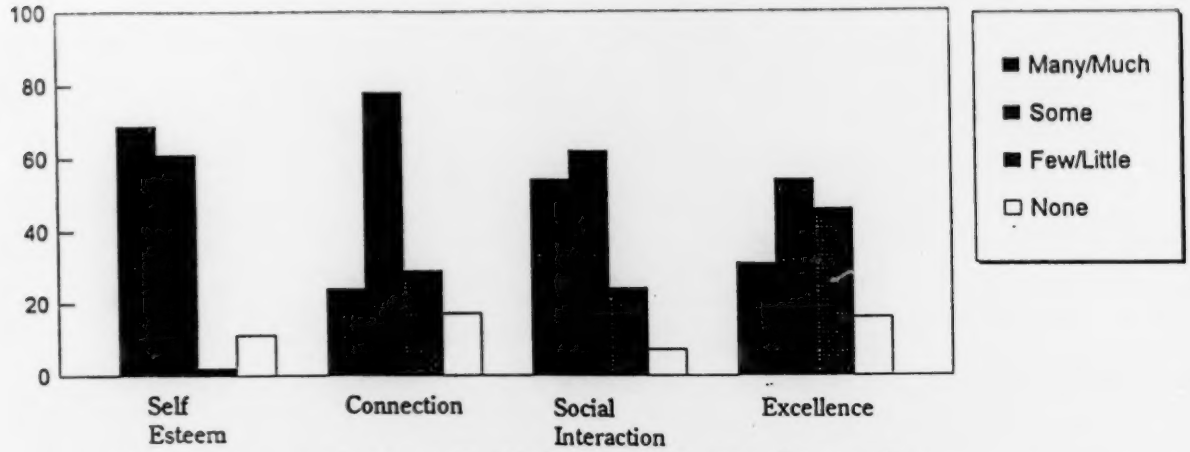

Figure 2. Results of Student Post-Questionnaire

as though most of the students who indicated themselves as leaning toward negative self esteem in the initial survey, had now moved into the negative category. The goal stated in Outcome One was reached, but clearly, the needs of some students must be addressed more aggressively.

Figure 3 combines the results of the two student surveys for ease of comparison.

In the original survey there were 58 students who responded they felt they would have little or no opportunity to demonstrate individual excellence as a part of the school program, but in the post survey (with 10 fewer respondents) this number had grown to

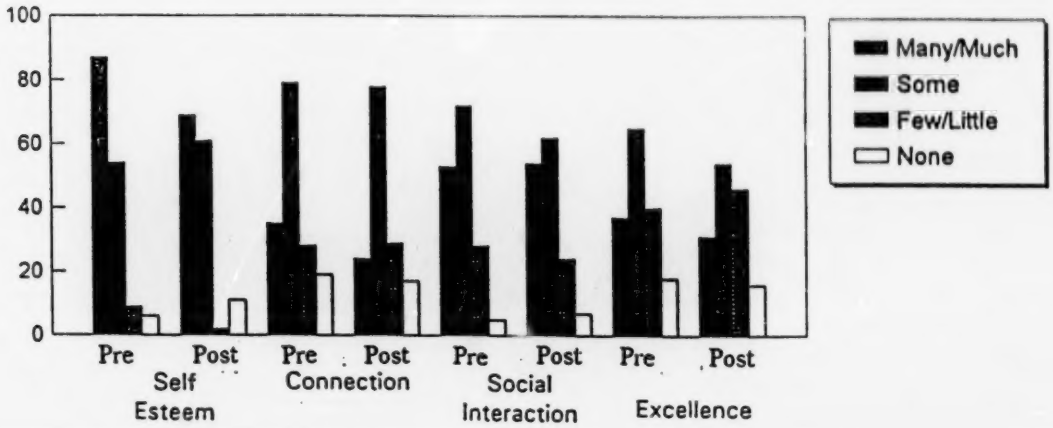

Figure 3. Comparative Results of Student Questionnaires

62. The number of students anticipating opportunities for social interaction with classmates as part of the school program had dropped from 125 to 116.

The expectation of 128 students out of 160 maintaining or improving their connection to school was not realized.

Outcome Two

It was projected that of parent responses to teacher-made post implementation questionnaire, at least 30 of 50 respondents would indicate the transition program generally met their child's overall social needs.

During the first week of implementation, a teacher-made questionnaire was sent to all parents of sixth graders to determine the parents' perceived social needs or concerns of their children and to

solicit parent input for programming (see Appendix D). After 12 weeks of implementation, the same group of parents was surveyed by teacher-made questionnaire to determine the degree to which they felt the transition program had met the needs of their children (see Appendix E).

Results would indicate that at least 30 of 50 respondents believed the transition program generally (as specified on questionnaire) met their children's needs.

For the initial survey, questionnaires were given to 160 students to take home and return the next day. The questionnaires were double sided so that parents could respond individually. After a week, only 29 completed surveys had been returned.Responses to the initial survey were less than anticipated, with 29 questionnaires returned. However, the concerns expressed by the respondents were significant (see Appendix G). Interestingly, the concerns expressed by the responding parents were generally those the social activities transition program was designed to address.

After 12 weeks of implementation, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to parents of all sixth graders. This time only 13 were returned. Of those, 8 indicated

the transition program had generally met their child's needs and 3 felt it had done so greatly. The other 2 responded it had only a little. Concerning opportunities for demonstrating individual excellence, 9 felt there were some or many, with 2 responding few and 2 indicating they did not know. Concerning opportunities for social interaction available to sixth graders, 10 responded many, 3 answered some, and 1, few. Comments on strengths and weakness of the social transition and suggestions for improvement are included (see Appendix H). These generally are consistent with the impressions of the program implementers.

Outcome two was not realized due to the small return of parent surveys. Of those parents responding, the percentage of positive responses was well above the goal of 60% (30 of 50), but the number of respondents, 13, was considerably below the goal of 50.

Outcome Three

Of sixth grade teachers responding to teacher-made post implementation questionnaire, at least 6 of 10 respondents would agree that most of the sixth graders had developed a sense of belonging or connection to school, participated in the socialization opportunities provided them, experienced opportunities to demonstrate

individual excellence, and now exhibited positive self-esteem (see Appendix F).

After 12 weeks of program implementation, all teachers of sixth graders were surveyed to ascertain their perception of the degree of success of the transition program. Only 7 of the teachers completed the survey. Results indicated that 5 of the 7 felt some to most of the students demonstrated a sense of belonging and had participated in the socialization opportunities provided for them. Only 4 of the 7 felt some to most had experienced opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence. The respondents were in agreement 7 out of 7 that some to most of the sixth graders with whom they came in contact exhibited positive self esteem. Responses to question 5 and 6 on the teacher questionnaire were minimal and reflective of the personalities of the respondents; therefore they have been left out of this section, but will be addressed in the Discussion section. The goal for Outcome Three clearly was not realized.

Discussion

The results of student participation in planned activities indicates the sixth graders, themselves,

took advantage of opportunities provided them. They were anxious for opportunities to socialize and participate in the total school program. Although these students were being provided more occasions for interaction, programming was still significantly isolating. In cross country, sixth graders participated with seventh and eighth graders; in assemblies all grades were present, but this setting was very structured; and although all grades participated in School Spirit Days, there was generally no mingling of students outside their own grade levels on these days. In band, sixth graders are in their own band and cannot advance, no matter how good they are. They still feel to some degree excluded. There are valid arguments on both sides of the issue of socially separating sixth graders from eighth graders. The developmental range between the youngest sixth graders and the oldest eighth graders is vast. Large-scale grouping of them may not be prudent, but more opportunities for cross-grade-level interaction, such as in yearbook club and art club, might be beneficial.

The number of students (62) who, after 12 weeks of program implementation, felt that they had little or no opportunity to demonstrate individual excellence was

disconcerting. However, when this figure is put next to the teachers' post-implementation responses concerning student opportunities for individual excellence, it causes one to do some serious thinking. If 3 of 7 sixth-grade teachers feel that few if any of the students have experienced opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence, it seems to make sense that 62 of 148 sixth graders are going to feel that they have little or no opportunity to demonstrate excellence.

The Appendices G and H, compiled from the parent responses to both surveys administered them, indicate that they are in touch with their children's needs and are supportive of the school taking a more aggressive role in addressing them.

A major concern expressed by all three groups participating in the surveys was the isolation of the sixth graders in this particular school setting. This writer believes that the socialization/transition program presented in this report was a success in that it was a beginning. Many aspects of it will continue through the end of the school year, at which time the program will be re-evaluated and recommendations made for revision and continuance.

While only a few sixth graders participated in yearbook and art club, those that did were hard-working and considered to be real assets to the organizations. They will be duly recognized in the yearbook publication. Sixth grade is being included in the yearbook, both as a unit and as a part of the whole school body. The honor roll breakfasts have been combined so that sixth graders are recognized in the same ceremony as the seventh and eighth graders. Sixth graders participated in cross country and have become members of the track team. Both boys and girls sixth grade intramurals have grown from only 3-5 participants to more than 40 boys and 10-12 girls. Intramurals are in isolation, but so are intramurals for seventh and eighth graders. Opportunities for development of self-esteem, socialization, connection, and excellence are available and are being taken advantage of.

A major drawback to extension of the activities program is personnel to plan and supervise activities. Most of the teachers who are in agreement as to the need for expanded programming are already overburdened with extra activities. All the teachers are genuinely pressed for time--classes are large; the entire staff is engrossed in developing a School Improvement Plan,

the guidelines for which are everchanging; many of the teachers are enrolled in professional growth programs, which are time consuming. Administration is enmeshed in its cumbersome duties as well as those accompanying overcrowding, overseeing the development of the School Improvement Plan, planning a building referendum and routine "emergencies." Although teachers and administration are aware of the advantages of extending the social/transition program for sixth graders, the reality of such extension depends upon the availability of manpower to do so.

Finally, this writer believes school climate and hidden curriculum are factors influencing the success of the sixth grade transition program. The tension that exists between the building administration and the staff is everpresent. Maintaining a positive attitude in such a climate requires much determination, for many it is impossible or a conscious choice to be negative. Through the hidden curriculum, teacher attitude is reflected to their students and in the attitudes their students develop. This writer believes that if 62 of the sixth graders believe they have little or no opportunity to demonstrate individual excellence in school, that figure is directly related to 3 of 7

teachers believing few, if any, of their students have had the opportunity to demonstrate individual excellence in school. This writer further believes it is a function of the educational institution to provide such opportunities. Although no social activities program is going to meet all of the needs of all of the students all of the time, there is still much that can be accomplished through developing programming. Also, the areas of self-esteem, connection, interaction with peers, opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence can and must be addressed in the classroom by creative, nurturing teachers. The children deserve no less. No amount of institutional programming will succeed unless it is enhanced in the classroom, where the students spend the bulk of their time in school.

Recommendations

This writer recommends that the social activities/transition program for sixth graders be continued and that at the end of the school year the entire staff be polled for suggestions for improving the program. The writer believes that the entire school community benefited from being a theme school, and that practice be continued.The writer suggests that

sixth graders be allowed to move up to a higher level band if they can meet the standards set for that band, and that membership in each band be determined by skill level rather than grade level.

The writer also recommends that the after school Activity Days be designed to incorporate more interests than a sock hop and a movie. Perhaps seventh and eighth graders could organize and/or supervise a variety of game rooms. The writer suggested at the onset of the activities program that the after school Activity Days be co-ordinated with the seventh and eighth grade dances, and still believes that would be most effective.

Including the sixth graders in "special" junior high dances should be considered. It may be inappropriate for them to be at all the junior high dances, but it might help them to feel more "included" if they were included in one or two dances, for instance, the Christmas dance and the end-of-the-year dance.

Establishing a sixth grade transition committee should be considered. It would be the function of this group to co-ordinate and oversee the sixth grade transition program. Sixth grade teachers should be

included on this committee. Intensive staff development should be initiated to improve teacher attitudes and relations between administration and teachers. Perhaps some teachers will need to be re-assigned in order to enhance the positive emphasis of the transition program. Communication lines and levels of trust need to be built between teachers and administrators as an initial step in improving school climate. It is difficult for any program to have a positive impact when it is functioning in an atmosphere of isolation and distrust.

This writer recommends that the sixth grade activities/transition program be continued and that it be re-evaluated and refined at least annually. It served as a strong beginning for the district in which it was implemented.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum were disseminated to the building administration in which it was implemented and a copy will be placed on file in the school district offices for any interested parties to examine.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT PARTICIPATION GRID

STUDENT PARTICIPATION GRID

Student Name	School Spirit Day 1	School Spirit Day 2	School Spirit Day 3	School Spirit Day 4	School Spirit Day 5	Band	Cross Country	Intramurals	Art Club/Yearbook	Activity Day
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										
5.										
6.										
7.										
8.										
9.										
10.										
11.										
12.										
13.										
14.										
15.										
16.										
17.										
18.										
19 (continuing to 160).										

APPENDIX B

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Questionnaire

(to be filled out during homeroom August 30)

1. Self-esteem might be described as how one feels about himself or herself. Place an X on the line below to indicate your degree of self-esteem:

_____

Positive Negative

2. Connection to school might be described as how much one feels he or she "fits in" in school, or has a sense of "belonging" while in school. Place an X next to the statement below that best describes your degree of "connection" to school:

_____ I enjoy school and look forward to sixth grade.

_____ School is ok.

_____ School is okay, but I'd rather be just about anyplace else.

_____ I hate going to school and am here only because I have to be.

3. Place an X next to the word below that best completes the following statement. "As part of the school program, I believe opportunities for social interaction with my classmates will be: _____ Many _____ Some _____ Few _____ None

4. Place an X next to the word below that best completes the following statement. "As part of the school program, I believe opportunities for me to demonstrate individual excellence will be:

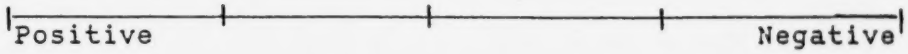
_____ Many _____ Some _____ Few _____ None

APPENDIX C

STUDENT POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Post-Questionnaire

1. Place an X on the line below to indicate your degree of self-esteem:



2. Place an X next to the statement below that best describes your degree of "connection" to school:

_____I enjoy school and look forward to the rest of the year.

_____School is okay.

_____School is okay, but I'd rather be just about anyplace else.

_____I hate school and am here only because I have to be.

3. Place an X next to the word below that best completes the following statement. "As part of the school program, I believe my opportunities for social interaction with my classmates will be:

_____Many _____Some _____Few _____None

4. Place an X next to the word below that best completes the following statement. "As part of the school program, I believe opportunities for me to demonstrate individual excellence will be:

_____Many _____Some _____Few _____None

5. List below activities you would still like to see made available for sixth graders to participate in:

_____

_____

Thank you for participating in this survey. Have a great year! I hope you will each Accept the Challenge to Be All That You Can Be!

Mrs. James

APPENDIX D

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Parent Questionnaire

Dear Parents of Sixth Graders,

In an effort to assist sixth graders in transition to junior high school and to better meet the social development needs of these students, the staff at Central is implementing a social development/transition program. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire below and return it to your child's homeroom teacher by Tuesday, August 31.

Please note that the questionnaire is duplicated on the reverse so that in two-parent families, parents may respond individually if they so choose.

Thank you for your participation.

Mrs. Darlene James

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1. Please list 3 social needs or concerns you believe your sixth grade child has at this time:

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

2. List programs or activities you would like us to investigate implementing as a means of addressing these needs:

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

Feel free to attach a page with more responses to the above questions, if you so choose.

APPENDIX E

PARENT POST-IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parents of Sixth Grade Students,

Please take a few minutes to complete the follow-up questionnaire concerning the sixth grade social development/transition program implemented at Central this year, and return this questionnaire to your child's homeroom teacher by Thursday, December 16.

Transition and socialization activities and events included: two motivational assemblies, cross country, band, all-school spirit days, intramurals, canned food drive, after-school sock hops, art club, and honor roll breakfast, as well as school-wide emphasis on sixth grade inclusion.

Please note that the questionnaire is duplicated on the reverse so that in two-parent families, parents may respond individually if they so choose.

Thank you for your participation.

Mrs. Darlene James

---

1. Place an X on the scale below to indicate the degree to which you feel the transition program met your child's needs:

Not at all	A little	Generally	Greatly

2. Place an X on the scale below to indicate the amount of opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence your child has had available to him or her:

None	Some	Few	Many	Don't Know

3. Place an X on the scale below to indicate the amount of opportunities for social interaction your child has had available to him or her:

None	Some	Few	Many	Don't Know

4. Use the space below to comment on the strengths or weaknesses of the social activities/transition program in relation to your child's developmental needs:

_____

_____

5. Use the space below to include suggestions for improvement of the social activities/transition program:

_____

APPENDIX F

TEACHER POST-IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Teachers of Sixth Graders,

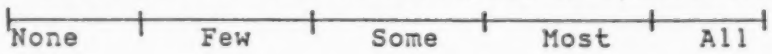
Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire concerning the sixth grade social development/transition program implemented this year, and return the questionnaire to me by Thursday, December 16.

Thank you for your efforts during the implementation of this program and the extra time taken in the completion of this questionnaire.

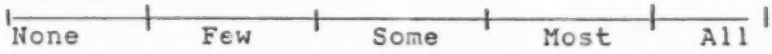
Darlene James

Place an X in the appropriate position on each bar line below to indicate your choise:

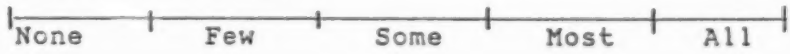
1. Of the sixth graders with whom you come in contact, how many do you feel have a sense of belonging or connection to school?



2. Of the sixth graders with whom you come in contact, how many do you feel have participated in the socialization opportunities provided for them?



3. Of the sixth graders with whom you come in contact, how many do you feel have experienced opportunities to demonstrate individual excellence?



4. Of the sixth graders with whom you come in contact, how many do you feel exhibit positive self-esteem?

5. List below what you feel to be strengths of the social development/transition program:

_____

_____.

6. List below suggestions for improving the program (better meeting the needs of students or meeting the needs of more students):

_____

_____.

APPENDIX G

RESPONSES TO INITIAL PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Responses to Initial Parent Questionnaire

Social needs or concerns you believe your sixth-grade child has at this time:

Handling peer pressure (the every day kind) (2)

Development of interpersonal skills (2)

Meeting people and making new friends (6)

Socializing, interacting, and problem solving with peers (3)

Develop self-confidence (2)

If someone teases him, not take it seriously, but shrug it off

To participate during school and after school activities

To be with other children of a good nature

To fit in school sports program (2)

Becoming comfortable in a new atmosphere with different students and new teachers

Having caring teachers that have patience with children from another country

Friendly to people

Nice to every teacher and friends

Answering questions in a nice way

Physical exercise (sports)

He can walk to school

He will be more trusted

An orientation program to address questions and

concerns of the new students

Adjustment to a new academically stressful environment

Need to fit in/be accepted (3)

Separate activities for boys and girls

Maintaining and achieving status-quo with regard to school grades, activities, and playtime

Speaking one's thoughts in public with regard to school and social questions (2)

Adjustment to new surroundings and upperclassmen

Relationships with existing and new friends

Greater educational expectations

Interaction with others/working as a team (2)

Needs to accept ideas other than his own (2)

Speaking out of turn

Transition from childish ways to young adult

How to deal with adolescent emotional highs and lows

Self esteem (2)

Sibling rivalry

To succeed in school work (2)

To do well in athletics

He has trouble with his handwriting

Not enough time for talking with friends

In 5th grade, didn't get picked by his peers for games or at recess

Cold socialization

The average kid is neglected (programs for gifted, programs for LD)

Inclusion into Central School, mixing

Teacher, child, parent co-operation

Parent understanding of math, methods of other subjects, requirements

We do not have any specific concerns

My child does very well socially

The environment

Drugs, violence

Fun activities

Has a problem asking questions

Increased sense of responsibility

Shy, conservative, quiet

Sixth graders are separated entirely for seventh and eighth graders during school

Student council should have representatives from each grade (6th, 7th, 8th)

Short attention span

List programs or activities you would like us to investigate implementing as a means of addressing these needs

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How to be "your own self"

How to communicate or interact better

How to meet people and make new friends

Basketball team (2)

Intramurals (3)

Modern dance lessons

Foreign language

Reading skills

Self-esteem

Interests in school activities

Having an orientation day where students from 7th and 8th grades explain to 6th graders about what to expect the next year and what new changes to expect and what to look forward to

Volleyball

Baseball

Soccer

Kids groups

Art group (2)

An in-depth orientation presented in a way that stimulates the students into recognizing their needs

Occasional field trips

No dances

I am at a loss to figure out programs

I feel that posit e attitudes of staff, teachers, and parents are keys to most of my concerns parents have with regard to raising "pre-teens"

Prep for high school (learning proper note taking)

Learning to study properly for tests due to quantity

Peer pressure, maturity, responsibilities

Group problem solving (3)

Develop club activities for those not interested in sports, such as chess, checkers, babysitting, recycling (4)

Rewards and bonuses for good behavior

Free period

Have P.E. instructor designate teams

More all-school activities (2)

Social worker more available (2)

In-service for parents

Continue to express the importance of asking questions when in doubt

Reiterate that asking questions does not indicate stupidity

Computer club

Mentoring 8th graders to 6th graders

Monitoring interaction with others

Reinforcement of instruction and assignments

Immediate contact of home when assignments are incomplete

APPENDIX H

RESPONSES TO FOLLOW-UP PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Responses to Follow-up Parent Questionnaire

Strengths or weaknesses of the social activities/transition program in relation to your child's developmental needs:

So far both of my children have participated in the band program and sock hop and enjoyed it.

I feel the sock hops are fun for the kids and am glad they're for the 6th graders, not an all junior high activity.

Honor roll breakfast was a great way to recognize the honorees.

Child said she enjoyed the assemblies.

Beginning school year program helped in presenting the theme.

Coming at a good time in her social development and aligned with her interests.

I think my daughter made the transition well , and she's looking forward to being a 7th grader.

The sock hop was a success.

The intramurals are great.

Honor roll breakfast was good, but we need more opportunities for children who excel to push even higher, more recognition for excellence.

Band caters to separating the kids.

Sixth grade is alienated from the rest of the school.

Sixth graders should be allowed to go to the junior high dances.

All activities have been great.

More sports activities for sixth graders.

Suggestions for improvement of the social activities/transition program:

What's already in place is acceptable.

My daughter and her friends have made a smooth transition from grade school to junior high.

More programs that include all grade levels.

More sports are needed. (2)

Invite sixth graders to a junior high dance.

We need a choral group.